1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda
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CHAPTER XIV

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD CEREMONIES

THE ceremonies connected with childbirth begin before the birth of the child. These ceremonies are only performed for the first child or when the woman obtains a new husband, so that they may, from one point of view, be regarded as marriage ceremonies. Nevertheless, I prefer to consider them here, and to leave the ceremonies more strictly connected with marriage till a later chapter. These latter ceremonies are far less elaborate than those to be described in this chapter, and may be more fitly considered in connexion with the social regulation of marriage.

At or about the fifth month of pregnancy, a ceremony is performed which is called *ár patitth kaitiititthpimi*, "village left, hand we burnt," or more shortly, *árvatpimi*, "village we leave," or *kaitiititthpimi*. The ceremony is named from its two essential features; the woman leaves the village and lives secluded in a hut and her wrists are burnt.

When it is known that the ceremony is to take place, a special hut, called *pushars* (Fig. 45), is built in a prescribed place at some little distance from the village, or if this building already exists, it is put into good order. The word *pushars* means "mud-house" or "earth-house," which would seem to point to a time when a temporary hut of mud was used, but at the present time it is built of wood, though it is of much simpler and rougher construction than the ordinary house.

The distance of the *pushars* from the huts in which the people live depends on the degree of sacredness of the village. According to Breeks, the distance is greatest in those villages

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02)1906 Toda

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which have a dairy of the conical kind, but it seems that there is no real difference between these villages and any other *etudmad*. In some cases when the dairy has a high degree of sanctity, the *puzhars* may be at an adjacent village; thus, a pregnant woman of Kindr goes into seclusion at Molkush,

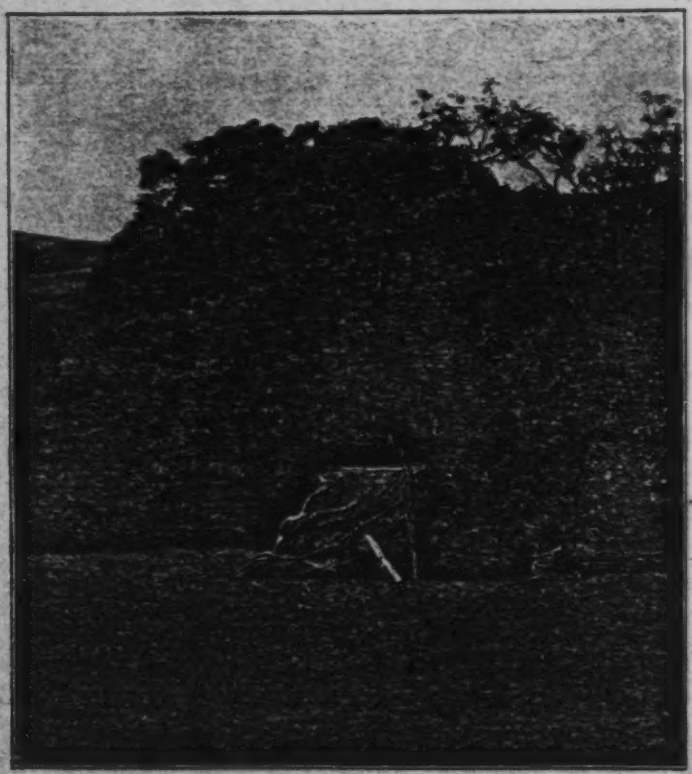

FIG. 45.—THE 'PUZHARS' AT MOLKUSH.

about a quarter of a mile away, and at this village the seclusion-hut (Fig. 45) is about a hundred yards from the house in which the people live.

I may mention here that the objection to the presence of a pregnant woman in one of the more sacred villages may extend to a time when she is not in the seclusion-hut. When I

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

visited Kindr for the purpose of testing the people of the village for colour-blindness, Sintagars, who was pregnant and was living at Molkush, was not allowed to come to the hut to be tested like the rest, but sat on the mound shown in the foreground of Fig. 7, about thirty yards away.

The features of the hand-burning ceremony as performed by the Tartharol differ considerably from those for a Teivali woman, and I will begin with a description of the former.

On the day of the new moon, the woman goes to the *pushars*.[1] The husband (or in his absence his brother or other near male relative) cuts six sticks of the kind called *kwadrikurs* and sets them up so as to represent a dairy with two rooms, which is called *pülpali*. He then cuts four bamboo-reeds called *mudr*, about eighteen inches long, which represent dairy vessels; two of them are called *patatpun*, and the other two *ertatpun*. He fills these with water taken neither from the *pali nipa* nor from the *ars nipa*, for if he touched the water of either of the streams, they would be defiled and their water could not be used. He therefore fetches the water from a stream at some distance from the village.

The husband brings the reeds half filled with water and places those called *patatpun* in the inner room of the *pülpali*. He takes the other two—the *ertatpun*—to a two-year-old female calf (*pöl*), and pours out the water from one reed on the left side of the middle of the back (*töv*) of the calf, and catches the water in the other. He then gives two leaves (*kakuders*) to the woman, who makes a leaf vessel, into which he pours three times from the *ertatpun* the water which has flowed from the back of the calf. The woman raises the leaf vessel to her forehead and then drinks, and the man puts the two *ertatpun* into the outer room of the *pülpali*.[1] The woman then bows down with her forehead to the threshold of the *pülpali*, and the man takes up the sticks forming the imitation dairy and the four reeds and throws all away.

[1] It will be noticed that the *patatpun* are placed in the inner room and the *ertatpun* in the outer room. In the ordinary dairy both would be placed in the inner room, though in different places. The procedure of this ceremony seems, therefore, to resemble that of the *ti* rather than of the ordinary dairy. It suggests that we have here a relic of a time when every dairy had at least two rooms, one for the things of the *patatmur* and another for the things of the *ertatmur*.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

843 The woman has brought with her a new earthenware pot called *mdtkddrik*, into which she puts food (rice or grain) and water, and places it on a small oven made on the spot with stones. When the food is cooked, the woman takes two leaves called *pelkkodsthmuliers*, *i.e.*, leaves used in the ordination of the *palikartmokk*, and portions out the food on the leaves. She then brings two pieces of wood called *parskuti* (Eleagnus latifolia), puts them in the ground and covers them with a blanket. The two leaf-plates with the food are now placed on the two pieces of wood, one on each, and the woman asks *Pirn podia*, *Piri podia ?* (*podia* = have you come?) My informants could tell me nothing about Pirn or Piri, except that the former was supposed to be male and the latter female.

The woman throws the *parskuti* into the bushes, this procedure being called *tapi kûrs vutpimi*, "bushes stick throw we," and then makes a little roll of threads which is called *pashti*, puts it in the fire and burns herself with the roll in four places, two on each hand, once on the prominence formed by the carpo-metacarpal joint of the thumb, and once on the prominence formed by the styloid process of the radius. The burning is sometimes done for her by the woman who is to stay in the *pushars* with her[1] during her period of seclusion. When the ceremony is over, the woman goes into the hut with her companion and stays there for nearly a month, till three or four days before the next new moon. While in the seclusion-hut, the woman is visited by relatives and friends, who do not, however, come near the hut, but stand some way off and say *kaitiitudpatia ?* ("Have you had hand-burning?") They leave a present of rice for the woman and go to the people of the village, by whom they are entertained.

When the woman comes out of the *pushars* at the end of the month, there is a ceremony called *marthk maj atpimi*, "To the village buttermilk we pour." Early in the morning of the appointed day a man of the Melgars clan comes to the village and milks one of the ordinary buffaloes (*putiir*) into the vessel called *kabanachok*. The buffalo must not have

[1] I was told at first that it might be done by her husband, but this appeared to be a mistake.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02)1906 Toda

843 been milked by any one else since the time it last calved. The Melgars man places the milk in front of the hut where the woman usually lives, and then goes away, and the milk is taken by the people of the village. In the evening, after the day's work is over and the buffaloes are shut up for the night, a woman is chosen who has had no contact with the secluded woman, and she takes the milk drawn by the Melgars man to the *puzhars*, together with the leaves of the kind called *parsers*. She pours out the milk three times into these leaves and gives to the pregnant woman to drink. The latter has previously bathed and put on a new mantle, and after drinking she returns to the ordinary hut and may resume her household work.

[618] The milking is done by a Melgars man for all the Tarthar clans except that of Kwòdrdoni, where the buffalo is milked by a man of that clan. I do not know why this clan forms an exception to the general rule, but Kwòdrdoni is one of the most remote Toda villages, and it is possible[1] that the difficulty of getting a Melgars man to come to them has led the people to do this part of the ceremony themselves.

For fifteen days after leaving the seclusion-hut, the woman must drink buttermilk procured from a Melgars dairy, and must take food called *peritòr*,[2] viz., grain or rice which has been cooked in Melgars buttermilk. At the end of the fifteen days she gives up taking the *peritòr*, but continues to drink Melgars buttermilk for another fifteen days.

For a woman of the Teivaliol, the ceremony of *urvatpimi* is much more simple. No *pülpali* is made, and the husband fetches two pieces of reed only, which are called *ertatpun*. They are half filled with water, which is poured from one over the back of a calf into the other as in the Tarthar ceremony, and the woman drinks in the same way, but this is immediately followed by the hand-burning, and the rite with the two sticks and the invocation of Pirn and Piri is entirely omitted.

[1] The fact that the people of Melgars and Kwòdrdoni are not allowed to intermarry suggests, however, that there is some relation between these clans which is the cause of the exception.

[2] This may possibly be a corruption of *perithòr*.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

643 The Teivali ceremony on coming out of the *puzhars* takes place in the early morning. A man (not the husband) fetches water from the *ars nipa* in a brass vessel called *achok*. He takes the vessel to a pregnant buffalo and tries to milk the buffalo over the vessel of water. Although no milk comes, the attempt is supposed to convert the water in the vessel into milk. The woman then leaves the seclusion-hut and is given two leaves (*parsers*), of which she makes a leaf cup, and the man pours the water which is supposed to be milk into the cup three times, and the woman drinks each time after raising the cup to her forehead. The woman and her companion then go to another special hut, called *aliars*, and stay there for a week, or if there is in the village a house of the kind called *merkalars* (see p. 29), the woman may go to the hinder part of this house instead of to the *aliars*, but in this case all the household things have to be removed from the *merkalars*.

At the end of the week in the *aliars* or *merkalars*, there follows the ceremony called *marthk maj atpimi*. Early in the morning the *palikartmokh* brings *penmaj* (*i.e.*, butter and buttermilk) in an earthenware pot and two firebrands (*tütkuli*) to the front of the hut, puts the brands on the ground, lays the pot on them for a time, and then puts the pot on the raised platform in front of the hut. He then goes away, and a woman brings a brass vessel (*terg*) and transfers the butter and buttermilk to the *terg*, and gives it to the woman, who drinks and goes to the ordinary hut.

While the woman is in the *aliars* or *merkalars*, she is not confined to the dwelling as when in the *puzhars*, but may go about. She must not, however, do any household work, nor go to any other village, nor to the ordinary huts of her own village. If in the hinder part of the *merkalars*, she must not go to the fore part of the house.

Thus the ritual of the Tartharol differs greatly from that of the Teivaliol in these ceremonies. The rite of making an artificial dairy is entirely omitted by the Teivaliol, and, as we shall see later, it is also omitted in a similar ceremony performed after childbirth, though the pieces of reed used to pour water over the calf are named after dairy vessels in both cases. I could obtain no explanation of the difference of

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

procedure, nor of the omission of the invocation of Pirn and Piri by the Teivali division. It is possible that this latter ceremony has been borrowed, but if so, there is no obvious reason why it should have been borrowed by one division, and not by the other. 943

In the ceremonies accompaning the return to ordinary life, it is perhaps natural that the Melgars man should only take part in the proceedings of his own division. The other chief difference in the procedure of the two divisions is that the return takes place in two stages among the Teivaliol, while the Tarthar woman goes directly from the *pushars* to the ordinary hut. I was told that the difference was connected with the fact that the Tarthar women drank milk, whilst the Teivali women did not, but I could not discover why this should lead to a difference of procedure.

The Pursütpimi Ceremony

About the seventh month of pregnancy a ceremony is performed, which is called *pursütpimi*, "bow (and arrow) we touch." This ceremony begins on the evening before the day of the new moon. The pregnant woman goes into a wood about a furlong from the village at which she is living. She is accompanied by her husband, or if she has several, by the husband who is to give the bow and arrow. The husband cuts a triangular niche in a tree,[1] of which the Toda name is *kers*. The niche is large enough to contain a lamp, and is made a few feet above the ground, so that it is about on a level with the eyes of the woman when she is sitting on the ground. Ghi is then put in an earthenware lamp, which is lighted and placed in the niche. Some sort of arrangement is made on the tree to provide a covering under which the woman is later to sit, but I could not satisfy myself exactly how this is done. Husband and wife then go to find the wood called *puv*,[2] and the grass called *nark*.[3] A bow (*purs*) is made from the wood by stripping off a piece of bark and stretching it across the bent stick so as to

[1] *Eugenia Arnottiana.* [2] *Sophora glauca.*
[3] *Andropogon schœnanthus.*

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

143 form the string of the bow.[1] The grass is put in the little artificial bow so as to resemble an arrow.

The husband and wife return to the tree with the bow and arrow, and the relatives of the pair come to the spot. The father of the woman promises a young female calf, the offspring of a given buffalo, which he names, saying after the the name *pòl todein*, or "calf I have given"; thus, *Kemars pòl todein* would mean, "I have given a calf, the daughter of Kemars."[2] Then husband and wife salute certain people by bowing before them and raising their feet to the forehead (*kalmelpudithti*). The wife salutes in this way all her male relatives and those of her husband older than herself—*i.e.*, she salutes those whom she would salute in this way under normal circumstances (see Chap. XXI). The husband salutes all the male[3] relatives of his wife, irrespective of their being older or younger than himself.

The wife then sits down beneath the tree in front of the lamp, and the husband gives her the imitation bow and arrow. In doing so he says the *kwarzam* of his village followed by the words "*Teikirzi Tirsk, pursvat!*"—*i.e.*, "To Teikirzi and Tirshti, hold the bow and arrow!" The wife replies, "*purs ivern?*"—"What is the name of the bow and arrow?"—and the husband then gives the name of the bow and arrow, which is different for each clan. The question and answer are each time repeated so that they are said three times. The formulæ repeated on this occasion differ for each clan in the *kwarzam* of the village and in the name of the bow. For the Kuudrol the latter was *pursgârûv*, so that a Kuudr man would first say, "*Atthkar Teikirzi Tirsk pursvat*," and in answer to his wife's question he would answer, "*Pursgârûv.*" The only clan which does not say the *kwarzam* of the village is that of Nòdrs, where only the names of the gods are mentioned.

I only obtained the special names of the bow from three clans—those of Kuudr, Kars and Taradr. That of

[1] See the bow in the hand of the boy in Fig. 57. This bow is the same as that used in the *pursütpimi* ceremony.

[2] The buffalo given in this way is called *pulkmadr*, or bow and arrow gift.

[3] My notes do not make it absolutely clear as to whether he may not also salute the female relatives of his wife, but I do not think that he does so.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

Kuudr has already been given; the name of the Kars bow is *pulkilkkin* and that of Taradr *pursüdsk*. When the husband gives the bow and arrow to his wife, she raises it to her forehead and then, holding it in her right hand, turns to gaze at the lamp in the tree. She looks for an hour or until the lamp goes out, and then all present[1] go to the village for food, except the husband and wife. The man makes a fireplace, lights a fire and cooks jaggery and rice in a new pot, using only ghi, and not butter, to mix the rice, and while he is doing this his wife ties up certain kinds of food in a cloth and puts the bundle under the tree. This food includes rice, ragi, barley, wheat, the grain (?) called *kirsi* (see p. 266), some jaggery and salt. Some pieces of honeycomb are also placed on leaves, which are then thrown away. When the food cooked by the man is ready both husband and wife eat together.

Later the relatives return from the village and all pass the night in the wood, the relatives keeping at some distance from the married pair. At daybreak on the following day, the day of the new moon, all return to the village and feast, food being given to all visitors.

Several of those who have described this ceremony have included in the description an account of "tying the *tali*."[2] So far as I could ascertain nothing of the kind is done. I inquired into the point many times and all agreed that it formed no part of the Toda ceremony and that its equivalent was the giving of the bow and arrow. More than one man spoke of the *pursüttpimi* ceremony as "tying the *tali*," but the latter expression is merely the equivalent of "marriage ceremony," and the very man who used this expression denied vehemently that tying the *tali* or anything else round

[1] According to a recent account given to me by Mr. Thurston, the people leave the spot about six o'clock in the evening. The time is determined by the opening of the flowers of *Mirabilis tetraphyta*, which is called by the Todas *ár mani pöv*, or six o'clock flower. This flower is a garden escape, so that this special practice must be recent, but it suggests that the general practice of telling the time of day by means of flowers may be an old Toda custom.

[2] Mr. Natesa Sastri (*Madras Mail*, August 28th, 1894) states that the bow and arrow are tied round the neck of the woman, so that they definitely take the place of the *tali*.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

843 the neck of the woman formed any part of the Toda ceremony.

It seemed, however, that after *pursütpimi* the woman is allowed to resume her ornaments, which she has been prohibited from wearing up to this time, and it is possible that this resumption of her ornaments may have been mistaken for "tying the *tali*." It seemed clear, however, that the ornaments were not put on by the husband, nor did the resumption of the ornaments partake in any way of a ceremonial character.

As I hoped to have a chance of witnessing this ceremony during my visit, I did not thresh out the details of *pursütpimi* as thoroughly as those of most other ceremonies and my account is not as complete as I could wish.

[851] The ceremony of *pursütpimi* is of the greatest importance from the social point of view and, as we shall see later, the fatherhood of the child depends entirely upon it. The man who gives the bow and arrow is the father of the child for all social purposes, and is regarded as such even if he has had nothing to do with the woman before the ceremony.

The ceremony must always be performed during the first pregnancy of a woman and it takes place in any succeeding pregnancy only when it is desired for any reason to alter the fatherhood of the children. One of the most serious scandals [626] in Toda society is the birth of a child when the mother has not been through this ceremony.

[764] Both the pregnancy ceremonies are performed at the first funeral of an unmarried or barren woman. In the case of an unmarried girl the bow and arrow are given at the *pursütpimi* ceremony by a *matchuni* of the deceased—*i.e.*, by a relative whom the deceased girl might herself have married. The hand-burning of the *urvatpimi* ceremony is usually performed by a woman of the same clan as the deceased.

171 Since the ceremonies are only performed at the first
843 pregnancy, or when it is desired to change the fatherhood
851 of a child, it seems clear that they closely resemble marriage
585 ceremonies. They would seem to be either marriage ceremonies which have been postponed till shortly before the

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

birth of the first child,[1] or, what is more probable, pregnancy ceremonies resembling those customary in India, which have acquired social significance and have come to resemble marriage ceremonies. But the numerous ceremonies which are performed during pregnancy by the Hindus take place during every pregnancy and are, therefore, sharply differentiated from the Toda rites.

CHILDBIRTH

When the woman returns from the seclusion-hut after the *urvatpimi* ceremony she lives in her usual home with the rest of the family and does her usual work, and she is delivered there. It seemed that any one might be present, and that there was no special ceremony connected with delivery.

During delivery, the woman kneels with her head resting on the breast of a man, usually her husband, who clasps his hands behind her neck. She is tended by a woman, usually by one noted for skill in these matters. If there is much delay, all men and women present lay their hands on the head of the woman and say:

"*Swâmi mas vhrmâ; swâmi pûâikan termâ.*"

If this is not efficacious a man brings water in a vessel and prays, stirring the water with a piece of grass of the kind called *kakar*. When the prayer is finished, the man sprinkles the water over the woman.

The cord (*pekû*) is cut with a knife, being held down with a stick while it is being cut.

The afterbirth is called *naj* or *pekûkûdri*. If there is delay in its delivery, a medicine called *najmad* is given which is procured from the Badagas. The afterbirth is buried on the day on which the woman goes to the seclusion-hut, a few days after delivery.

[1] This seems to have occurred in a similar ceremony practised by the Badagas, among whom it is said that a woman is not fully considered a wife till about the seventh month of the first pregnancy, when a cord is put round her neck by the husband and the legal marriage becomes complete. (See Thurston, *Bull.* IV., p. 167.)

CHAP. XXV. describe the connection between such brothers as follows: 'Their fathers are brothers-in-law: their mothers being sisters, they are brothers.' An uncle is styled 'my little father'; most significant.

The marriage system I have described is elastic. It is capable of being modified in its internal working without change in the actual principle. Thus, when women are scarce, several men have to be content with one wife between them. But as women become more numerous, a greater proportion of men are able to procure a wife a-piece. This condition of permanent routine is supremely satisfying to the Toda mind.

The general expression for marriage is represented by the word kûdiken — I join.[5] Thus, 'Beliani is married to Nastufi' would be translated Beliani Nastufig kûdthchi, or they are joined to one another. But in addressing a man with the casual question of, 'Are you married?' the ordinary way of putting it, would be to say, 'Is there a son?'—Mokh vathchya? He would reply, Ha, mokh vathchi, 'Yes, there is a son:' or if married, but childless, he would detail, Ân kukh kûdthbini, mokh illade—'I joined a woman, a son is not.'

Similarly, the enquiry made of a woman would be, Belthta gavthchya?—'Is the neck-ring tied?'[6]

Mr. Metz has been so good as to describe for me a singular custom connected with weddings, which he learnt subsequently to my having left the Nilagiris: of which no sort of explanation can be supplied by the Todas.

When the wife has gone seven months with her first child, she retires with her husband alone, to the depths of the village wood, where at the foot of some tree she places a

[5] I am not certain that in the word 'join,' we have got the most primitive meaning of kûdiken. The Hindustani word kûdna, and its Sanskrit root kurdd=*to play*, might be compared.

[6] For the modes in which husbands and wives address one another, see Chapter VII.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Todas

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lamp. Kneeling before the light, she receives from her husband a bow and arrow, made by him,[1] which she salutes by lowering her forehead to them. Taking up the weapons, she asks, 'What is the name of your bow?'—each clan apparently having a different name for its bow. He tells her the name, Kurkutvashk or Virzhvashk, or any other. Question and answer are repeated three times. The wife then deposits the bow and arrow at the foot of the tree. The pair remain at the spot without shelter but that of the tree overhead, all night, eating a meal that evening, and another in the morning, before return to the village.

This looks very much like the perpetuation of a custom inherited from some past condition of life, when Todas carried weapons. But its object, and the reason for postponing the ceremony for some months after marriage, is not easy to comprehend. Perhaps, in a communistic era, possibly antecedent to polyandry—see Chapter XXVII.—it may have implied an acknowledgment of paternity, and of the obligation on the part of the father, to provide food for the coming family.

[1] It will be remembered that the weapons used at funerals are made by the Kotas.

In the fifth month of a woman's first pregnancy, she marks her two thumbs in two places by a slight burn with a lighted rag.

In the seventh month, at the time of new moon, the woman's father visits the husband's hut. The husband asks "Shall I tie the *Tâli*?"* The father consents. The husband then asks "Shall I give a bow?" The father says "Yes." The husband makes a bow of the *Hubbe* shrub (*Sophora glauca*), the back serving for the string. He takes this into a Shola in the afternoon, and gives it to his wife, who, sitting down before a jungle tree, in the stem of which a convenient hole can be found to place a small earthenware lamp, asks the name of the bow, holds it a little while, and then places it at the foot of the tree.

Each mand has a different name for the bow—

In Kândal it is *Perkedkhem*.
„ Muttinâd „ *Pirkirkh*.
„ Kodanâd „ *Kurrkâdurirk*.
„ Manjakal „ *Bellgâriff*.

They remain in the Shola all night, and eat their morning meal there, returning home in the evening. On this occasion the woman's father generally presents the couple with a *Nîga* (a buffalo heifer). I have tried to find out the origin and object of these customs, but can get no further than *Mâmûl* and *Shâstra*. One man added "*By the Bow and Arrow we have got a wife who is with child.*"‡

The most remarkable portions of the Toda ritual are those connected with the dead, in which there is much that is beautiful. A Toda always pays to the departed the respect of silence. A dead man's name is never heard again; his friends resort to any amount of periphrasis rather than profane by ordinary use "the household name of one whom God has taken."

They have two ceremonies; the "green funeral" (*Kordzai Kêda*), which takes place soon after death, and the "dry funeral" (*Marvendli Kêda*), a sort of commemorative festival, sometimes performed by the relatives of a single person, but more frequently in honour of any number of one clan who may have died within a twelvemonth or so.

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* The *Tâli* is the Hindu equivalent of wedding ring. It is either a gold ornament of a peculiar shape, or a necklace of beads, which is tied on the neck of the bride by the bridegroom at the time of marriage. Among the Todas a string of black beads represents the Tali.

† See *Coorg Memoirs*, by Rev. H. Moegling, p. 40:—

"As soon as a Coorg boy is born, a little bow of a castor-oil-plant stick (*Ricinus communis*), with an arrow "made of a leaf stalk of the same plant, is put into his little hands. He is thus, at taking his first breath, "introduced into the world as a future huntsman and warrior."

‡ A somewhat similar use of the bow is described in Dr. Leitner's account of Dardistan (*Ind. Antiquary*, No. 1, p. 12.) "When the bridegroom has to go for his bride to a distant village, he is furnished with a bow. "On arriving at his native place, he crosses the threshold of his bride with an arrow, and then shoots it off. He "generally shoots three arrows in the direction of his home." Are these traces of "marriage by capture"?[1] That such marriages have been a recognised practice in India from ancient times is evident from Manu, iii. 33.

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[1] See *Development of Relationships*, by Sir J. Lubbock: *Journal Anthropological Institute*, vol. for January, July 1871, page 3:—

"Marriage in Rome was symbolised by capture or purchase, as among so many of the lower races at the present day. In fact the "idea of marriage among the lower races of men generally is essentially of a different character from ours; it is material, not "spiritual; it is founded on force, not on love; the wife is not united but enslaved to her husband."

4: King G-5 (no date) 1870 Acc6 Toda Acc6

582 of which is understood to ratify the agreement. When, in due
583 course of time, the marriage takes place, the bride, who is probably about fifteen or sixteen years of age, receives from her father a dowry of several buffaloes, together with necklaces, armlets, and ear-rings. The ceremony is generally celebrated by a dance, which, though not of a very exciting description, seems to afford sufficient satisfaction to these cheerful, good-natured people. It consists of stamping on each foot alternately, the body being jerked half round at one step, and back again at the next, to the time of a very monotonous song.

• 943 When about to become a mother, in place of receiving every
951 comfort and consideration, the Toda woman is sent out, or, what amounts to the same thing, is by custom expected to go out into the forest, and there remain alone, protected only in case of stormy weather by the shelter of the bushes. After the child is born, it is not allowed to be seen by any-one but its parents for some weeks, at the end of which time it is duly named and presented in public.

562 It is a fact worth noticing that, notwithstanding the scarcity
563 of women (said to be owing to the practice of female infanticide which prevailed till within a very few years ago), the Todas never contract marriages with the other tribes, though living together on most friendly terms. That there never has been any mixture of the races, is sufficiently evident from the strongly marked distinctions that continue to exist between them.

It is not less singular, on the other hand, that, in spite of the system of intermarriage which has thus prevailed among the Todas for many generations, or it may be ages, there should not only be no sign of physical deterioration, but that both sexes should be so remarkable for their stature, pleasing exterior, and noble bearing. This would seem to confirm the theory that the marriage of relations, however closely connected, would, in cases of mutual faultless constitution and physical form, result in these excellences of the parents being transmitted, just as in the opposite case physical and mental defects common to both are transmitted, and even augmented.

764 When a death occurs among the Todas, the corpse, covered over with certain aromatic herbs, is left in the hut either till distant friends are summoned, or until the occurrence of a propitious day for the burial; these people being firm believers in

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These scars are produced by burning the skin
304 with red-hot sticks of *Litsæa Wightiana* (the sacred fire-
[824] stick). The Todas believe that the branding enables
[234] them to milk the buffaloes with perfect ease, or as
[155] Dr. Rivers puts it, that it cures the pain caused by
the fatigue of milking. "The marks," he says, "are
made when a boy is about twelve years old, at which age
he begins to milk the buffaloes." About the fifth month
of a woman's first pregnancy, on the new-moon day, she
●[843] goes through a ceremony, in which she brands herself,
or is branded by another woman, by means of a rag
rolled up, dipped in oil and lighted, with a dot on the
carpo-metacarpal joint of each thumb and on each wrist.

142 The women are lighter in colour than the men, and
the colour of the body has been aptly described as of a
café-au-lait tint. The skin of the female children and
young adults is often of a warm copper hue. Some of
[302] the young women, with their raven-black hair dressed in
glossy ringlets, and bright glistening eyes, are distinctly
good-looking, but both good looks and complexion are
[145] short-lived, and the women speedily degenerate into
uncomely hags. As in Maori land, so in Toda land,
[562] one finds a race of superb men coupled to hideous
women, and, with the exception of the young girls, the
fair sex is the male sex. Both men and women cover
291 their bodies with a white mantle with blue and red lines,
[439] called putkûli, which is purchased in the Ootacamund
[531] bazar, and is sometimes decorated with embroidery
worked by the Toda women. The odour of the person
147 of the Todas, caused by the rancid butter which they
[294] apply to the mantle as a preservative reagent, or with
[231] which they anoint their bodies, is quite characteristic.
[302] With a view to testing his sense of smell, long after
our return from Paikara, I blindfolded a friend who had
accompanied me thither, and presented before his nose

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about eight and ten, naked save for a loin-cloth, seated on the ground, awaiting our arrival. As a mark of respect to the palols, the three Todas who accompanied me arranged their putkūlis so that the right arm was laid bare, and one of them, who was wearing a turban, removed it. A long palaver ensued in consequence of the palols demanding ten rupees to cover the expenses of the purificatory ceremonies, which, they maintained, would be necessary if I desecrated the mand by photographing it. Eventually, however, under promise of a far smaller sum, the dwelling-hut was photographed, with palols, kaltmokhs, and a domestic cat seated in front of it.

In connection with the palol being forbidden to cross a river by a bridge, it may be noted that the river which flows past the Paikāra bungalow is regarded as sacred by the Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. The Todas will not use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hand out of the putkūli as a mark of respect. Concerning the origin of the Paikāra river, a grotesque legend was narrated to us. Many years ago, the story goes, two Todas, uncle and nephew, went out to gather honey. After walking for a few miles they separated, and proceeded in different directions. The uncle was unsuccessful in the search, but the more fortunate nephew secured two kandis (bamboo measures) of honey. This, with a view to keeping it all for himself, he secreted in a crevice among the rocks, with the exception of a very small quantity, which he made his uncle believe was the entire product of his search. On the

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595 among them. When the girl becomes the wife of a boy, it is usually understood that she becomes also the wife of his brothers. In nearly every case at the present time, and in recent generations, the husbands of a woman are own brothers. In a few cases, though not brothers, they are of the same clan. Very rarely do they belong to
595 different clans. One of the most interesting features of
851 Toda polyandry is the method by which it is arranged who shall be regarded as the father of a child. For all social and legal purposes, the father of a child is the man
[843] who performs a certain ceremony about the seventh month of pregnancy, in which an imitation bow and arrow are given to the woman. When the husbands are own brothers, the eldest brother usually gives the bow and arrow, and is the father of the child, though, so long as the brothers live together, the other brothers are also regarded as fathers. It is in the cases in which the husbands are not own brothers that the ceremony becomes of real social importance. In these cases, it is arranged that one of the husbands shall give the bow and arrow, and this man is the father, not only of the child born shortly afterwards, but also of all succeeding children, till another husband performs the essential ceremony. Fatherhood is determined so essentially by this ceremony that a man who has been dead for several years is regarded as the father of any children born by his widow, if no other man has given the bow and arrow.
595 There is no doubt that, in former times, the polyandry
[847] of the Todas was associated with female infanticide, and it is probable that the latter custom still exists to some extent, though strenuously denied. There is reason to
[162] believe that women are now more plentiful than formerly, though they are still in a distinct minority. Any increase, however, in the number of women does not

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appear to have led to any great diminution of polyandrous marriages, but polyandry is often combined with polygyny. Two or more brothers may have two or more wives in common. In such marriages, however, it seems to be a growing custom that one brother should give the bow and arrow to one wife, and another brother to another wife." 595

The pregnancy ceremony referred to above is called pursutpimi, or bow (and arrow) we touch. According to the account given to me by several independent witnesses, the woman proceeds, accompanied by members of the tribe, on a new moon-day in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, to a shola, where she sits with the man who is to become the father of her child near a kiaz tree (*Eugenia Arnottiana*). The man asks the father of the woman if he may bring the bow, and, on obtaining his consent, goes in search of a shrub (*Sophora glauca*), from a twig of which he makes a mimic bow. The arrow is represented by a blade of grass called nark (*Andropogon Schœnanthus*). Meanwhile a triangular niche has been cut in the kiaz tree, in which a lighted lamp is placed. The woman seats herself in front of the lamp, and, on the return of the man, asks thrice "Whose bow is it?" or "What is it?" meaning to whom, or to which mand does the child belong? The bow and arrow are handed to the woman, who raises them to her head, touches her forehead with them, and places them near the tree. From this moment the lawful father of the child is the man from whom she has received the bow and arrow. He places on the ground at the foot of the tree some rice, various kinds of grain, chillies, jaggery (crude sugar), and salt tied in a cloth. All those present then leave, except the man and woman, who remain near the tree till about six o'clock in the evening, 595 851 843 [824]

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595 851 842 [805] [824] when they return to the mand. The time is determined, in the vicinity of Ootacamund, by the opening of the flowers of *Onothera tetraptera* (evening primrose), a garden escape called by the Todas āru mani pūv (six o'clock flower), which opens towards evening.* It may be noted that, at the second funeral of a male, a miniature bow and three arrows are burnt with various other articles within the stone circle (azaram). [1165]

648 585 A few years ago (1902), the Todas, in a petition to Government, prayed for special legislation to legalise their marriages on the lines of the Malabar Marriage Act. The Government was of opinion that legislation was unnecessary, and that it was open to such of the Todas as were willing to sign the declaration prescribed by section 10 of the Marriage Act III of 1872 to contract legal marriages under the provision of that Act. The Treasury Deputy Collector of the Nilgiris was appointed Registrar of Toda marriages. No marriage has been registered up to the present time.

847 178 The practice of infanticide among the Todas is best summed up in the words of an aged Toda during an interview with Colonel Marshall.† "I was a little boy when Mr. Sullivan (the first English pioneer of the Nilgiris) visited these mountains. In those days it was the custom to kill children, but the practice has long died out, and now one never hears of it. I don't know whether it was wrong or not to kill them, but we were very poor, and could not support our children. Now every one has a mantle (putkuli), but formerly there was only one for the whole family. We did not kill them to please any god, but because it was our custom. The mother never nursed the child, and the parents did

* I have seen this plant growing on the grass in front of the Pukhúrs bungalow.
† *Op. cit.*

12:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1938)1941 AW60 Toda AW60

535 614 765 [648] [616] dancing will add somewhat to the treatment. Dancing takes place at weddings[16] and at such religious ceremonies as the giving of salt to the buffaloes (up-otjt), the rethatching of a dairy (poḷ-ful-fæ ıst), and the prayer-ceremony at a chief mund[17] (mod-furtjt), as well as at such unusual social occasions as the reception of an important European visitor, the celebration under the patronage of the Governor of Madras by all the inhabitants of the Nilgiris of a Jubilee in the British royal family, large Badaga ceremonies which many Todas attend, etc. At such dances men from both moieties participate in the same dance. Men who may not dance are those who are mourning a death. (a) If the first funeral has not yet taken place, dancing is prohibited to those who are mourning the death of a man of the same patrilineal sib, of the same matrilineal sib, or of one who is called pojoıḷ, i.e., wife's father or brother, wife's father's brother, and conversely, daughter's husband, sister's husband, brother's daughter's husband (cf. p. 165). If the dead person is a woman, the prohibition affects, besides members of her matrilineal sib and her pojoıḷ, only those members of her father's patrilineal sib who belong to her immediate family. (b) If the first funeral has taken place, but mourning still obtains until the second funeral shall have been performed, no one may dance who is related to the dead person by relationship within the matrilineal sib, by the closest relationship within the patrilineal sib, i.e. by membership in the immediate family of the dead person, or by pojoıḷ relationship as in (a). In both (a) and (b), when a man is dead, dancing is prohibited for the husband and sons of the woman in the opposite moiety with whom he has had sexual relations of the "lover-mistress" type;[18] when a woman is dead, dancing is prohibited for the man in the opposite moiety with whom she has had "lover-mistress" relations, and for his sons.

[616] [837]

535 614 616 764 765 [837] Dancing also takes place at funerals, whether first or second. Normally only men are allowed to dance who belong to the other moiety than the one to which the dead person belonged. Here again the prohibitions indicated in the preceding paragraph hold with regard to people in the "lover-mistress" relationship to the dead person. And, of course, no person may dance who is mourning any other death. The rule permitting only men of the opposite moiety to dance is sometimes broken. At the funeral of some relatively unimportant person there may not be enough men of the opposite moiety present to dance, or at the funeral of a member of the unkitj, nirj, and purpoır sibs of the tɔıṛṛas moiety, since the munds of these sibs are far from any munds of the tööṛiḷ moiety. In this case members of the same moiety as the dead person will be permitted to dance, but no one who is mourning the dead

[843] [851] [621]

[16] There is no dancing at the ceremony when a man gives the toy bow and arrow to his wife during her pregnancy to legitimize the child (puṣ-æjt). At a ceremony of this kind which I attended with Mr C. P. Skrine, Agent of the Madras States and author of *Chinese Central Asia* (London, 1926), the men danced so that he should be able to see how it is done. The words composed during the dance were about myself and the ceremony was mentioned only as one in a list of ceremonies that I had seen.

[17] A mund (Toda word mod) is, throughout this paper, a dairy institution plus a dwelling place. The significance of "chief mund" (æt-ɵmd-mod) as opposed to other munds (mɛn-mod) has been explained in my paper Toda Culture Thirty-five Years After (Annals, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Vol. 19, pp. 101–21, 1938), pp. 113–15. [18] See reference in note 9 above.

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

595 spring with them it not a physiological concept, but a socially legalized
851 one. They are not the father of a given child simply because they are married to its mother or because they have procreated it physically; they are so because they have "given the bow and arrow" in the *pursiitpimi* ceremony.

595 The name means "bow we touch" and the ceremony takes place
851 during the seventh month of pregnancy of a Toda woman – which appears as if the tribe realized that children can be born prematurely
[843] at that stage and live, and that therefore the determination of their paternity brooks no further delay. The occasion is the evening before the new moon. The woman, accompanied by the man who is to give the bow and arrow, goes to a *shola* near the *mad* at which she lives, and her companion cuts a triangular niche in a *kiersh* tree (Eugenia
[824] Arnottiana Wight) in which he places an earthenware Toda wick lamp,
[354] burning ghee. From the tree called *puv* (Sophora Glauca) they now fashion a miniature bow, by stretching a piece of the bark across a bent stick, and they equip it with an equally small arrow, made from *mark* grass (Andropogon schoenanthus).

In the meantime, the relatives of the man and woman have arrived at the spot and they are ritually saluted by the couple in the usual Toda manner. The woman's father promises to give a female buffalo calf, specifying in a consecrated formula which buffalo is its mother (in a case with which I was familiar (of Konokh and Mab of Kiur mund) it was the respective maternal uncles of the man and woman who made the promise and gave Rs. 5/- in cash). When this has been done, the woman goes and sits beneath the *kiersh* tree, facing the lamp in the niche above her.

The man then approaches her holding the bow and arrow and (in the instance mentioned above, he first thrice requested his father-in-law's permission to do this) addresses her so that all can hear, saying, after the *kwarshm* of his *mad*, the sentence: "*Terkishi Tirshk, pursvat!* (To Terkish and Tirshk, hold the bow)." The woman replies: "*Purs*
[W4] *iveru?* (What is the name of the bow)" and the man answers her by giving the name for it which is that used in his clan, thus specifying for the onlookers that the child to be born will belong to his *modol*, as each of the Toda clans has another *kwarsh* name for the bow. Question and answer are repeated three times, after which the man gives the woman the bow and arrow. She raises it once to her forehead and, holding it in her right hand, lifts her eyes so as to gaze at the light in the tree trunk above her until it goes out for lack of fuel, something

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601 It was when Sotabuf was expecting her first baby that I was able to
123 see for myself the *urvatpimi* ceremony described by Rivers in his book
● [843] (*The Todas*, p. 315 and fol.). This was on the 12th July, 1939, when the child was expected to be born four months later. I never found out of what sex it eventually turned out to be, and have thus had to leave this unspecified in the above genealogy. In 1949, when I was in the Nilgiris
[164] for the second time, Keel fell seriously ill with a bladder infection. I took him to the local hospital, where the doctor and staff did what they could to help, but to no avail. He died shortly afterwards, and his body
[578] was cremated on the 1st September. Incidentally, it was at this funeral
[682] that Tödhen, mentioned above, was allegedly poisoned by Piliar (52) with the ensuing results which I have described earlier (see p. 266).

601 With a classificatory kinship system such as the Todas use, there is
614 not much distinction in the appellations used to designate the various fathers that a man may have. The generic term for father is *In* or *Aia*, the latter being employed more often as the form of address. These names are used to describe not only one's own immediate fathers, but also all those elders of the *modol* and of the *polkhliol* which are classified as such: males of the clan who are the same generation as the fathers, and husbands of the sisters of the mother, including husbands of all those who are of the same clan and same generation as the mother. Elder fathers (that is, both real and classificatory) are known as *Perudaia*, while younger ones are called *Karudaia*. In the Melgarsh family, of which I made a special study, while Pads was the *In* or *Aia* because he had given the bow and arrow to Silidz, Karnoz, being the elder, was
[595] *Perudaia* and Purshwuö, the youngest, *Karudaia*. But these appellations could just as well have been used to designate elder and younger classificatory fathers of the clan and mother-sib, and as such are unreliable to distinguish between the different immediate fathers whom children of polyandrous households may have.

595 With the Todas, a very conservative and patriarchal people, the rule of primogeniture is strictly observed. Whereas among other polyandrous people, I found that dominance at home was more a question of personality than of seniority among the fathers, with the Nilgiri tribe, the eldest brother is always considered the head of the family, even if a younger one has given the common wife the bow and arrow, and is thus publicly recognized as the legal father of the offspring. There is only one case in which he may relinquish his rights, and that is if he has left with another woman and his share of buffaloes to put up a separate household of his own. Thus Karnoz at Melgarsh, after he had